

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10 and 13-15 as shown below, in which deleted terms are shown with strikethrough and/or double brackets, and added terms are shown with underscoring. Also, please cancel claims 3, 11, 12 and 16 without prejudice or dedication or abandonment of the subject matter thereof. The following list of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of the claims in the application.

1. (Currently Amended) A side airbag system comprising:
  - a side airbag unit, which deploys an airbag in a sideward direction with respect to an occupant sitting on a vehicle seat;
  - a posture detector, which determines a posture of said occupant;
  - a weight detector, which measures a weight of said occupant; and
  - a deployment controller, which controls the deployment of said airbag based on said posture and weight of said occupant, wherein  
the posture detector includes a plurality of sensors disposed on a seat back of the vehicle seat, and  
the posture detector monitors a pattern of signal output from the plurality of sensors on the seat back, and estimates the occupant's posture based on a profile of this pattern.
2. (Original) A side airbag system according to claim 1, wherein  
said deployment controller allows the deployment of said airbag irrespective of the posture of said occupant, when said weight measured by said weight detector exceeds a threshold value.
3. Canceled.
4. (Currently Amended) A side airbag system ~~according to claim 3~~ comprising:  
a side airbag unit, which deploys an airbag in a sideward direction with respect to an occupant sitting on a vehicle seat;

a posture detector, which determines a posture of said occupant;  
a weight detector, which measures a weight of said occupant; and  
a deployment controller, which controls the deployment of said airbag based on said posture and weight of said occupant;

said side airbag unit is provided on one side of a seat back of said vehicle seat, and  
said posture detector includes:

a plurality of first sensors, which are placed on said seat back and are lined up at regular interval along the up-and-down direction with respect to said seat back, and

a second sensor, which is placed on the one side of said seat back, wherein

said posture detector categorizes said posture of said occupant into one of multiple posture categories based on the detection result of said first sensors and second sensor, and said posture detector outputs a posture information, which indicates said posture category, to said deployment controller,

said weight detector categorizes said weight of said occupant into one of multiple weight categories, and said weight detector outputs a weight information, which indicates said weight category, to said deployment controller, and

said deployment controller controls the deployment of said airbag based on said posture information and said weight information.

5. (Currently Amended) A side airbag system according to claim 3 comprising:

a side airbag unit, which deploys an airbag in a sideward direction with respect to an occupant sitting on a vehicle seat;

a posture detector, which determines a posture of said occupant;

a weight detector, which measures a weight of said occupant; and

a deployment controller, which controls the deployment of said airbag based on said posture and weight of said occupant, wherein

said side airbag unit is provided on one side of a seat back of said vehicle seat, and

said posture detector includes:

a plurality of first sensors, which are placed on said seat back and are lined up at regular

interval along the up-and-down direction with respect to said seat back, and

a second sensor, which is placed on the one side of said seat back, wherein

said posture detector categorizes said posture of said occupant into one of three types of posture categories of "VACANT", "LEANING", and "NORMAL", and said posture detector outputs a posture information, which indicates said posture category, to said deployment controller,

said weight detector categorizes said weight of said occupant into one of four types of weight categories of "EMPTY", "LOW", "HIGH", and "FAULT", and said weight detector outputs a weight information, which indicates said weight category, to said deployment controller, and

said deployment controller controls the deployment of said airbag based on said posture information and said weight information.

6. (Original) A side airbag system according to claim 5, wherein

said deployment controller forbids the deployment of said airbag if said weight category is "EMPTY" and said posture category is "VACANT".

7. (Original) A side airbag system according to claim 5, wherein

said deployment controller determines whether or not to allow the deployment of said airbag based on said posture information when said weight category is "FAULT".

8. (Currently Amended) A side airbag system according to claim ~~[[3]]~~ 4, wherein

said deployment controller allows the deployment of said airbag irrespective of the posture of said occupant, when said weight measured by said weight detector exceeds a threshold value.

9. (Currently Amended) A side airbag system according to claim ~~[[3]]~~ 5, wherein

the output from said posture detector is categorized, and the deployment controller ~~control unit~~ controls the airbag based on the category of the output of the posture detector.

10. (Currently Amended) A side airbag system according to claim 1, wherein the posture detector comprises a means for discriminating between ~~short and tall people~~ small and large occupants.
11. Canceled
12. Canceled
13. (Currently Amended) A side airbag system according to claim 1[[1]], wherein the output from said weight detector is categorized, and the ~~control unit~~ deployment controller controls the airbag based on the category of the output of the weight detector.
14. (Currently Amended) A side airbag system according to claim 1, wherein the output from said posture detector is categorized, and the ~~control unit~~ deployment controller controls the airbag based on the category of the output of the posture detector.
15. (Currently Amended) A side airbag system according to claim 14, wherein the output from said weight detector is categorized, and the ~~control unit~~ deployment controller controls the airbag based on the category of the output of the weight detector.
16. Canceled